

colleagues continue to follow his lead in lockstep.

The President can't have it both ways. He has said many times: Why don't they extend the legislation? We tried to. He would not let us. So it simply is illogical as to what he is talking about.

Never in our Nation's history has national security succumbed to this kind of political posturing. It is time for my Republican colleagues to withdraw their opposition.

MORNING NEWS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, every morning when I get up, I go out and do my exercise. It takes about an hour. I usually listen to public radio. I am anxious to hear the news in the morning to see what has happened.

This morning, hearing the morning news was very distressing. It was a terrible day both at home and abroad in Iraq. A coordinated suicide bombing killed—we don't know how many at this stage—at last count, about 70 and injured at least 120. We don't know how many, but 120 will die. It happened in a crowded Baghdad shopping district.

A couple days ago, another attack killed 26. A few weeks ago, a horrifying suicide attack on Shiite pilgrims killed about 100. This doesn't take into consideration the kidnappings, the small bombings, and other acts of terror that take place in Iraq every day.

Although it may have receded from the front pages of our newspapers, there is no doubt the Iraqi civil war wages on, with no end in sight.

There are 150,000 brave young Americans in that far-off land policing another country's civil war. Our troops are shouldering an enormous burden of the war, but all Americans are suffering the consequences. We are now spending \$12 billion a month on that war. That is more than \$400 million every day, \$17 million every hour. In my short remarks here, we will wind up spending about \$5 million in Iraq. Mr. President, \$12 billion a month from a country, our country, that is staggering economically; \$12 billion a month to build roads in Iraq while our own roads crumble.

From where does this money come? It is all borrowed. President Bush already burned through trillions of dollars prudently saved by the Clinton administration and has spent trillions of dollars on tax giveaways for big business and the superwealthy.

We are putting the cost of the war on credit cards. Who will pay the bill? My children, my children's children and my children's children's children will be paying this bill. Future generations will be burdened with paying this bill, plus interest; meanwhile, the burden of an economy that is spiraling downward every day.

This morning's news on the economy announced the U.S. economy lost 63,000 jobs last month. When I first started listening to the news this morning,

they expected this report to come out that they expected 5,000 jobs lost. They were 58,000 wrong; there were 63,000 jobs lost—the largest monthly job loss in nearly 5 years. For the second month in a row, our country has lost jobs. We also learned that the number of jobs lost in January was larger than previously reported. The number has been revised up to more than 20,000.

It comes as no surprise that the manufacturing and construction sectors were among the hardest hit. Manufacturing had 52,000 jobs lost; construction, 39,000 job losses. Homebuilders are laying off construction workers as new homes remain unsold. Today, we learned the fourth quarter of 2007 saw the highest level of homes having foreclosure in our history. And now the amount of equity Americans have in their homes has dropped to the lowest level since World War II.

Yesterday, oil went to more than \$106 a barrel. We all remember when we were concerned when it hit \$50 a barrel. It was good news last night because it dropped to \$105.47 a barrel.

The American people are already struggling under the enormous burden of skyrocketing prices for groceries, heat for their homes, gasoline.

I heard my friend, the distinguished junior Senator from Texas, say that during the Bush administration 9 million jobs have been created. That is nothing to brag about. During the Clinton 8 years—this President has been on the job 7 years and going on 3 months—President Clinton created 23 million jobs.

By every indication, things are getting worse. President Bush said this week that he does not believe our country is heading for a recession. This morning, all signs say he is wrong. But regardless of what label we use, there is no doubt whatever that people in America are suffering. There is likewise no doubt that if we do not take action, things will get worse.

The economic stimulus bill we passed last month will help. I am pleased Democrats were able to secure rebates for 21.5 million senior citizens and 250,000 disabled American veterans in the bill that was passed. There is no doubt that an extra \$600 will help Americans pay for groceries, health, and gas. But no one thinks this economic stimulus is enough to turn our economy around. We must legislate the growing housing crisis—the eye of the economic storm.

President Bush, who does not think America is headed for a recession, responded to the housing crisis by directing Secretary Paulson to create a voluntary program to encourage banks to work with homeowners facing foreclosure. Do we need a directive from the President to tell banks to work with homeowners who are facing foreclosure? I hope not.

This week, Secretary Paulson released data on the President's proposal. How did the voluntary approach work? Not very well. Just a drop in the buck-

et. It helps hardly any; some say about 2 percent. For hundreds of thousands, the only thing this offer did was to add on the amount of the missed payment to the amount due. That is not a modification. That will do nothing to help struggling families keep their homes.

The voluntary efforts Secretary Paulson led have had a positive impact but not much. Even one family saved from foreclosure is a good step. But with millions at risk to lose their homes and the news growing worse every day, the Bush administration's voluntary program is not the way to approach this.

Last week, we introduced a comprehensive housing stimulus bill that would help hundreds of thousands of homeowners that the President's voluntary program leaves behind. It has five points to help families avoid foreclosure: First, by improving loan disclosures. Second, we help families avoid foreclosure by increasing preforeclosure counseling funds. Third, we expand refinancing opportunities for homeowners stuck in bad loans. Fourth, we provide funds to help the highest need communities purchase and rehabilitate foreclosed properties. Fifth, we amend the Bankruptcy Code to allow home loans on primary residences to be modified.

How have our Republican colleagues responded to our responsible plan? They blocked us from going forward, stopped us. The Republicans proposed an alternative plan consisting of four concepts. One of these was to change the tort law. This is not the way to go. One of their other proposals was to lower taxes. This is not the way to go.

Just this week, Chairman Bernanke said the crisis demands a vigorous response. He said:

Reducing the rate of preventable foreclosures would promote economic stability for households, neighborhood, and the Nation as a whole. Although lenders and servicers have scaled up their efforts and adopted a wider variety of loss-mitigation techniques, more can, and should, be done.

Those are the words of Chairman Bernanke, a call for our legislation to pass. That is what we need to do. Voluntary programs will not work. We have to move forward. We ask the Republicans to join with us in this most important legislation and stop blocking our ability to stimulate the economy as it relates to housing. They have to stop being beholden to the big banks and Wall Street and be beholden to the people who are in trouble—middle-class America.

We have a few things left here.

My friend from Montana, who has, at this stage of the year, probably the most important job in the Senate, being chairman of the Finance Committee—every problem we have, we go to the Finance Committee to see what we can do to work it out. So I appreciate the good work of my friend from Montana. The people of Montana are fortunate to have this good man as their Senator because we all know that

with Senator BAUCUS, Montana comes first, but we all know, all of us serving in the Senate, that he is a reservoir of good will, intelligence, and understanding, and he helps us all with our problems.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

TRIBUTE TO LAURIE SULLIVAN

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I speak today in tribute to a friend, Laurie Sullivan, who passed away late last month.

Laurie was a lawyer, a legislative advocate, and a business leader. I admired Laurie professionally and personally. But I was not alone, because everyone admired Laurie.

Laurie was a cut above the rest. Washington is a place where people can lose their way. Not Laurie. She was grounded. And she was centered.

Laurie stood out because she was in it for the right reasons. She built a well-respected consulting firm, because she cared about good policy. She cared about making Government work.

People admired Laurie for her intelligence, her wit, and her graciousness. She was a breath of fresh air. A veteran of Capitol Hill, Laurie was confident enough to take her work seriously, but not so much that she couldn't laugh or share a joke.

People were drawn to Laurie because she was the kind of person who gave energy. She didn't take it.

Nothing made Laurie happier than being with her family. She talked about her nieces and nephews frequently. Her face lit up each time she mentioned their latest activities or accomplishments. She was proud of them. And she treasured the time that she spent with them. She described trips with her family as priceless memories.

Laurie was also a very generous person. And her generosity was not limited to her family. She gave generously of her time and resources to her community and her friends.

She worked with a local mentoring program focusing on teenagers who had experienced a death in the family. She hired a student from the University of Virginia at Wise. The student worked at her firm for the summer. Laurie gave him a laptop computer. She helped him pay his college bills.

Laurie also gave advice. She counseled her nieces and nephews. She counseled the students whom she mentored. She recommended strategies for her clients. And she counseled women who were starting a business.

She gave her views on healthcare and politics to me and other Senators who were lucky enough to be part of her circle of friends. Her advice was always solid.

When her nieces and nephews followed her advice, they prospered. Laurie's business grew, because her clients learned that she was right. The students she mentored succeeded in college.

Laurie was truly a wonderful person. She knew what was most important in this world. And she made the most of it while she was with us. We should all be so lucky as to live that way.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BAUCUS. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL AFTERSCHOOL ASSOCIATION 20TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, next week, members of the afterschool community will be gathering for the 20th anniversary of the National AfterSchool Association Conference. The initial conference held two decades ago marked the first formal meeting of afterschool professionals under their own organization to discuss and develop solutions to address the needs of school-age children during their hours out of school.

Of course, back then we didn't call it afterschool. Instead, we talked about "latchkey" programs for "latchkey kids." At the outset, these programs replaced the need for latchkeys around the neck with welcoming, safe, and nurturing environments; they were a prime factor in the creation of the Act for Better Child Care.

As pioneers in the school-age movement, this passionate, dedicated group of leaders recognized that the needs of these students were distinct from those of early childhood. Their movement helped school-age providers network and share resources, culminating in the creation of the National School-Age Care Alliance, which later became the National Afterschool Association, NAA. Over time, 36 State affiliates were established.

In the past two decades, the field has evolved and NAA with it. Parents wanted more opportunities for their children, and the need for assuring quality programming became evident. In collaboration with the School Age Child Project at Wellesley College, NAA developed national quality standards and a national accreditation process for afterschool programs. These standards became the foundation for other groups' guidelines for programs for school-age children.

The NAA continues to be a leading voice in the afterschool community with almost 10,000 members nationally and internationally. The professionals who make up NAA's membership supply a critical component of quality programs, providing children with high-quality programming and positive relationships with adult mentors. The NAA has worked on behalf of the afterschool workforce to improve its quality and ensure that the profession's voice

is heard. Today, their annual conference remains a key way for the afterschool community to share and network.

Afterschool has grown by leaps and bounds and now includes a diversity of programs providing a wide array of opportunities for young people. These programs tackle a variety of issues including bolstering academic performance, preventing childhood obesity, and exposing children to the arts and music. Through time, the NAA has always maintained its commitment to supporting quality programs with well-trained staff dedicated to helping children grow to the best of their abilities. Because of the NAA, parents can more successfully balance their work and home life and millions of American children have safe places to grow and develop when the school day ends.

I am proud to join with those in attendance at this milestone NAA conference celebrating the journey of the past 20 years. I congratulate the members of the afterschool community on this special anniversary and thank them for their hard work creating safe and engaging environments for our children.

COSPONSORS OF S. 2716

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senator from Alabama, Mr. SESSIONS, the Senator from Texas, Mr. CORNYN, the Senator from Louisiana, Mr. VITTER, and the Senator from South Carolina, Mr. DEMINT, be added as cosponsors to my bill to authorize the National Guard to provide support for the border control activities of the United States Customs and Border Protection of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes, S. 2716.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL SLEEP AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize March 8, 2008, as Suddenly Sleepy Saturday—A Day of Narcolepsy Awareness, part of National Sleep Awareness Week. Sleep is an integral part of health and overall well-being, and its importance cannot be stressed enough. Sleep disorders present a chronic health threat that can compromise normal physical, mental, and emotional functioning. There are an estimated 135,000 Americans suffering from narcolepsy, and half of that total remains undiagnosed.

Narcolepsy is a chronic disorder, which causes excessive daytime sleepiness, irresistible sleep attacks, and cataplexy—a loss of muscle tone, hypnagogic hallucinations, sleep paralysis, and disrupted nighttime sleep in women, men, and children of all ethnic backgrounds. Symptoms often begin in the teen years and increase over time. Undiagnosed narcolepsy can impair educational goals, relationships, career success, and even one's independence.